(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Freight movement by Rail Network

2995. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that lack of effective freight transport by rail network and delivery logistics are some of the impedimentsin the economic growth of the country;

(b) whether in relation to China, India's freight movement by rail network is poor and tariff high;

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to identify and remove the shortcomings and make the system competitive by international standards;

(d) whether Government are considering to open up freight movement by rail network to foreign players; and

(e) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NARANBHAI RATHWA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. Between 1992-2002, the two railways carried almost the same volume of passenger traffic (Passenger Kilometers), but the Chinese Railways carried four and half times the freight traffic (Tonne-Kilometers) carried by Indian Railways. The average freight tariff is India is almost 66 per cent higher than that in China.

(c) In order to substantially increase our capacity for freight transport, it is planned to construct two Dedicated Freight Corridors (on Western and Eastern routes) at an estimated cost of Rs. 22,000 crore. Besides, a large number of other projects like New Lines, Doubling, Gauge Conversions Traffic Facility Railway Electrifications etc. have been sanctioi *tea* and the works are in progress. After completion of these works, the capacity constraints will be removed substantially and will increase tnroughput or? the Indian Railway network.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.